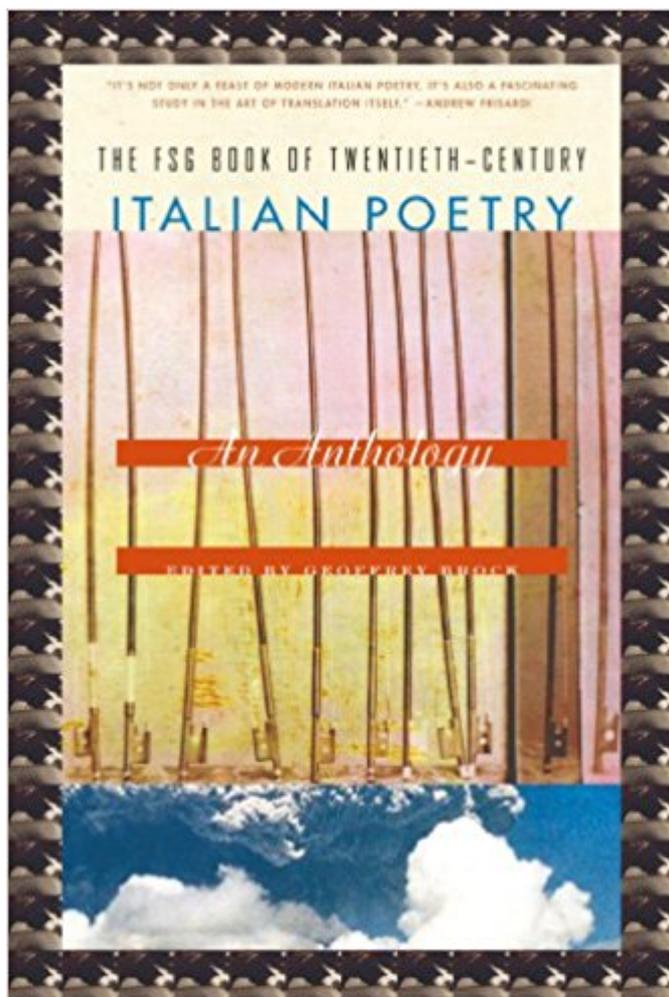


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The FSG Book Of Twentieth-Century Italian Poetry: An Anthology



Synopsis

The first comprehensive anthology of modern Italian poetry, in a beautiful bilingual edition. More than a century has passed since F. T. Marinetti's "Futurist Manifesto" slammed the door on the nineteenth century and trumpeted the arrival of modernity. Since then, against the backdrop of two world wars and many social upheavals, Italian poets have explored the possibilities of verse in a modern age, creating one of the great bodies of twentieth-century poetry. Even before Marinetti, poets such as Giovanni Pascoli had begun to clear the weedy rhetoric and withered diction from the once-glorious but by then decadent grounds of Italian poetry. And their winter labors led to an extraordinary spring: Giuseppe Ungaretti's wartime distillations and Eugenio Montale's "astringent music"; Umberto Saba's song of himself and Salvatore Quasimodo's hermetic involutions. After World War II, new generations—including such marvelously diverse poets as Sandro Penna, Pier Paolo Pasolini, Amelia Rosselli, Vittorio Sereni, and Raffaello Baldini—extended the promise of the prewar era into our time. Surprising and illuminating, *The FSG Book of Twentieth-Century Italian Poetry* invites the reader to examine the works of these and other poets—seventy-three in all—in conversation with one another. Edited by the poet and translator Geoffrey Brock, these poems have been rendered into English by some of our finest English-language poets, including Charles Wright, Paul Muldoon, and many exciting younger voices.

Book Information

Paperback: 720 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux; Reprint edition (October 13, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374533687

ISBN-13: 978-0374533687

Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 1.8 x 8.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,513,725 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #143 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Regional & Cultural > European > Italian](#) #2094 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Anthologies](#)

Customer Reviews

While Spanish and French poetry in bilingual editions enrich many English-speaking readers' ability to follow, haltingly or fluidly, the original language alongside translations, Italian languishes by

comparison. The fewer among us familiar with some Italian must search more diligently for bilingual works to assist our study, while those without a knowledge of that language find more novels than poems rendered into English. Geoffrey Brock edits 73 poets from the past century, who were born between 1855 and 1957. This allows the older poets to represent their inheritance from the past, when Italy was forming as a nation if not a unified manner of speaking or writing, given that Italian has a group of dialects rather than a standardized language until relatively recently. The cut-off date for poets born 60 years ago means that we can witness many poets still working at their peak nowadays. Furthermore, anthologies sometimes strain to include younger writers, but not all of these will be read far in the future. Those included here share only their peninsular origins, for they remain diverse. Brock introduces the many shifts of Italian poetry during this long span. Starting with Giovanni Pascoli (1855-1912), those inheriting the message of political unification and linguistic accessibility focused on "the small things," moving Italian verse away from the grand or the mythic. As politics loomed, complimentary movements emerged. Crepuscularism and Hermeticism speak in darker moods as the shadowy and the sealed-off turned attention inward under Fascism. Postwar neo-realism rallied "a popular, progressive, anti-elitist stance; its dangers were didacticism and paternalism." Brock's introduction surveys dramatic changes after WWII.

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